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## Series Review

**Program:** *Wild About Animals*  
**Shows reviewed:** Episodes 73 and 75  
**Program length:** 30 minutes

*Wild About Animals* is a reality science series that is produced for children in the 13-16 age group, and is designed to educate, inform and entertain those viewers. This program fulfills its purpose by providing a high level of educational value. The structure of each show consists of four (4) different segments/stories which make for a varied, fast paced program. Through the use of dramatic, stunning footage combined with an engaging and entertaining narrative, the show creates a general tone that is particularly effective in connecting to the target audience. The level of detail in each show is also appropriate and the segments move quickly from one topic to the next.

The host, Mariette Hartley who is an animal rights activist and Emmy award winning actress, creates a bond with the viewer through her pleasing delivery. Coupled with a very conversational style is the MTV shooting style. The program open is visually engaging, featuring scenes of animals in their habitats in the form of a teaser for the audience.

In *Wild About Animals* episode 73, the audience is introduced to bears, bison, lemurs and dogs. From the wild to the house pet, the program touches on how animals play an important role in our lives. Another segment in the same episode looks at therapy dogs and how they can contribute to the betterment of people's lives. Meeting patients for whom these dogs create the difference between being dependent and independent is a very strong message for a teenage viewer to learn. Exposure to science and nature is integrated with history and personal contextualization of animals and their roles in our habitat. The depth of information contributes to a high level learning experience.

A second episode, *Wild About Animals* 75, introduces the viewer to pot belly pigs as pets. This is a humorous and educational segment. A couple becomes passionate about the pigs, and their entire lives are devoted to caring for them. Their house is filled with comical and unusual pig paraphernalia, and their backyard has a pig pen for these animals. The audience learns about the specific habits and needs of these pigs, and will understand why the couple has grown so fond of them. Another compelling story in this episode is about Yosemite National Park which shows the symbiotic relationship between

a giant sequoia tree and a tiny beetle. The narration is dramatic, and serves to tell the story of this unusual relationship.

Pacing throughout the show is excellent and will keep the attention of a teen viewer. At the end of the show, to provide some closure, visuals include highlights of the program. This technique takes the educational aspect of the program to another level as it can stimulate discourse following viewing, and would be useful if the program were to be viewed in a classroom setting.

Overall, the depth of information conveyed is quite impressive. Also host Mariette Hartley is excellent, and has the ability to create a connection with the audience based on trust, compassion and dedication to education.

Summary:

Target audience for content, learning modules and style:

- Ages 13 – 16 years old

Genre:

- Science/nature/educational

Learning Objectives:

- Develop science literacy
- Science as inquiry
- Science in social and personal perspectives
- Appreciation for nature and science

Outcomes for students:

- Develop working knowledge of animals and their environments
- Recognize that animals are an important part of the global ecosystem

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Betsy Leebron Tutelman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Betsy Leebron Tutelman  
Senior Faculty Advisor to the Provost